Chapter 33: Winter Arrangements

Rain
THE RAIN SEEMS LOUDER THAN NORMAL
Au
THINGS GET QUIET WHEN YOU'RE ALONE
NOW THAT I THINK ABOUT IT, HAVE I EVER SPENT A NIGHT ALONE IN THE DORMS SINCE I CAME TO AMAGAI?
THAT'S RIGHT, EVEN IF IT RAINS THERE'S NO NEED FOR YOU TO STAY WITH HARU-CHAN ANYMORE.

Whish
EVEN THOUGH WE ENDURED THESE INCOMPREHENSIBLE DIFFICULTIES TOGETHER FOR OVER HALF A YEAR...
MAKI-KUN?
WHAT'S GOING ON? ISN'T IT ALREADY PAST CURFEW?
Creak

HUH?
Gather
Gather
MAKI-CHAN, WHAT'S UP?
WELL...
I...
DID YOU FORGET SOMETHING?
THE IDEA OF ONLY ME MOVING ON...
JUST BECAUSE I WAS HEALED DOESN'T MEAN I CAN ACT LIKE IT HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH ME ANYMORE!
I'M GOING TO SUPPORT YOU GUYS UNTIL EVERY LAST ONE OF YOU HAS RETURNED TO NORMAL!

Maki-chan...!!
UM...
THAT'S ALL I CAME TO SAY.
I WOULD HAVE FELT PRETTY HEARTLESS IF I HADN'T.
You're so cool, Maki-chan!!
WHY DON'T YOU STAY OVER FOR TONIGHT AS WELL, MAKI-KUN?
Grab
Hey!! Don't hug me like that when you're transformed!

We should sleep with Maki-chan's futon in the middle!
I GUESS I'M FINE WITH IT...
YOU'RE OKAY WITH SLEEPING IN THE SAME ROOM AS US, RIGHT?
Tuck
But separate the futons a bit
Grab
Cut it out!!
Rain
Rain
Zz
Zz

RAIN
EVEN THOUGH I DIDN'T HAVE ANY PROBLEMS WITH IT WHEN I WAS A GIRL MYSELF...
SLEEPING WITH FOUR GIRLS IN THE SAME ROOM IS A LITTLE..
!!
CAN'T SLEEP?
SIGH... SORRY ABOUT THIS, RYOKO.
ROLL
Z-z
Z-z
BA-DUMP
Open

Grab
Grin
...I'M JUST FEELING A LITTLE TENSE.
!!
...YOU KNOW, AFTER EXPERIENCING THIS STRANGE CONDITION THERE HAVE BEEN TIMES WHEN I'VE FELT STUPID HAVING THOUGHTS LIKE "BECAUSE I'M A MAN" OR "BECAUSE I'M A WOMAN".
...YEAH.
A BOY'S HANDS REALLY ARE BIG, HUH?

BUT...
IT'S ALSO THANKS TO THAT TIME...
THE FLIGHTY UNEASINESS I FELT DURING MY TIME AS A GIRL MIGHT HAVE BEEN BECAUSE I WAS ORIGINALLY A MAN.
...THAT NOW, WHEN I TOUCH A GIRL'S HANDS, SMALLER AND THINNER THAN MY OWN, I KNOW TO TREASURE THEM.
IF THE PERSON I CAME TO LIKE MADE ME THE SUBJECT OF EXPRESSIONS LIKE "YOU'RE CUTE" OR "I WANT TO PROTECT YOU", I WOULDN'T FEEL UNEASY LIKE THIS EITHER.
WHETHER THE PERSON YOU LIKE IS A WOMAN OR A MAN, I THINK THAT TO BE ABLE TO TOUCH AND COMMUNICATE YOUR FEELINGS IS SOMETHING EXCEPTIONAL.
THAT'S BECAUSE THE ONE WHOSE HANDS YOU WANT TO TOUCH ARE RYOKO-SAN'S, RIGHT?

HAH?!
SAY, HAVE YOU ALREADY KISSED HER?
WHAT ARE YOU SAYING!?
O~ OF COURSE!
YUP.
Why should I have to talk about that?
AH, MAYBE THAT WAS WAY BACK WHEN YOU FIRST STARTED DATING?
IN THAT CASE YOU COULD TALK ABOUT SOMETHING MORE RECENT.
YOU KNOW, RYOKO AND I BASICALLY JUST STARTED GOING OUT AGAIN, SO…
I HAVEN'T GONE BACK TO KYOTO EVEN ONCE YE…
WAIT, ALL OF YOU ARE AWAKE, AREN'T YOU!!
HE NOTICED…

Being noisy in the middle of the night.
Tsk, you found us out.
OF COURSE WE'D BE UP WITH YOU YELLING LIKE THAT.
THAT'S RIGHT. YOU'RE IN A LONG DISTANCE RELATIONSHIP, NOW THAT I THINK ABOUT IT.
A SCARF?
YEAH. IF I DON'T START WORKING ON IT NOW I WON'T FINISH IN TIME FOR WINTER.
I- IS IT A PRESENT?
For Christmas or Valentine's?
IT'S A CHRISTMAS PRESENT FOR A SENPAI IN MY CLUB

WOULDN'T IT BE FINE JUST TO MAKE IT?
Well- I mean- I don't have anyone to give it to!
YOU SHOULD MAKE ONE TOO. IF I REMEMBER CORRECTLY, YOU HAVE SKILLED FINGERS.
YOU HAVE SOMEONE YOU LIKE, DON'T YOU?
EVEN WITHOUT SOMEONE TO GIVE IT TO?
Open
I DON'T KNOW IF HE'D BE HAPPY TO RECEIVE SOMETHING FROM ME OR NOT.
MUCH LESS SOMETHING HAND-KNITTED.
IF I THOUGHT YOU WERE GOING TO GIVE HIM SOME FRANTICALLY-MADE SCARF I WOULD TELL YOU TO STOP, BUT YOU'RE REALLY GOOD AT WORKING WITH YOUR HANDS, SO I THINK IT'S PROBABLY FINE.
Actually it makes me want one too
Come on~ It'd be best if you didn't say that so loudly

A BOY FROM AMAGAI ACADEMY WHO'S GOOD AT COOKING, LIKES CHOCOLATE, AND HAS COME OVER TO MY HOUSE BEFORE
EVEN THOUGH I KNOW A LOT ABOUT HIM THIS IS HARD, ISN'T IT
I WANT ONE LIKE THIS
Eh~ I can't do something that difficult!
Lucky
Cute
...SHOULD I JUST MAKE IT FOR YOU, THEN?
IS THAT OKAY?
IT'S FINE.
MY MOM BOUGHT A MOUNTAIN'S WORTH OF YARN AND THEN NEVER TOUCHED IT, SO I DON'T NEED TO BUY ANY.
AND I DON'T HAVE ANY PLANS TO PREPARE FOR ON CHRISTMAS OR VALENTINE'S, EITHER.
Flip

THAT SOUNDS NICE GOING OUT WITH SOMEONE...
I WONDER IF TSUKI-CHAN IS GETTING KISARAGI-KUN A PRESENT OF SOME KIND.
WITH UNREQUITED LOVE,
IF YOU NEVER ACT ON IT, IT WILL JUST DISAPPEAR FROM WITHIN YOU.
WERE YOU BOTHERED BY ME, THEN?
BUT I'M AFRAID THAT THE PERSON I LIKE WILL BE BOTHERED BY IT.

BUT, EVEN IF YOU DO HOLD YOURSELF BACK AND RUN FROM IT, ALL YOU'RE DOING IS PUTTING AN END TO YOUR OWN GOOD MEMORIES.
That's not...
EVERYONE FEELS THINGS DIFFERENTLY, AND IT'S TRUE YOU WON'T PESTER THEM THIS WAY, NO MATTER HOW THEY MIGHT TAKE THE NEWS
WELL, THAT'S AS FAR AS I'LL PUSH YOU. IT'S KIND OF FRUSTRATING, REALLY.
Pat
...YOU'RE RIGHT.
PERHAPS YOU'LL FIGURE SOMETHING OUT AFTER A LITTLE HARMLESS KNITTING?

IT SAYS THIS GIRL'S DEFINITELY GOING TO COME NEXT YEAR
AH, IT'S THE GIRL FROM THE COMMERCIAL FOR THAT DRINK
The version with her winter school uniform is super cute.
Right
Twitch
THEY'RE TALKING ABOUT AZUSA
I'VE BEEN SEEING HER IN MAGAZINES A LOT RECENTLY.
RIGHT HERE IT SAYS SHE'S GOING TO BE IN A DRAMA NEXT YEAR, TOO
HUH?!
THAT CAN'T BE RIGHT! AFTER ALL, GIRLS AT AMAGAI AREN'T ALLOWED TO BE IN THE SHOW BIZ!
AH, BUT IF SHE BECOMES TOO FAMOUS IT'LL BE BORING I'VE GOT MIXED FEELINGS
Tighten
Crush
WHAT ARE YOU, A HIPSTER?
DON'T SAY SELFISH THINGS LIKE THAT! IF YOU'RE HER FAN THEN CHEER HER ON HONESTLY!
...WAIT, WHY AM I GETTING WORKED UP OVER THIS...?

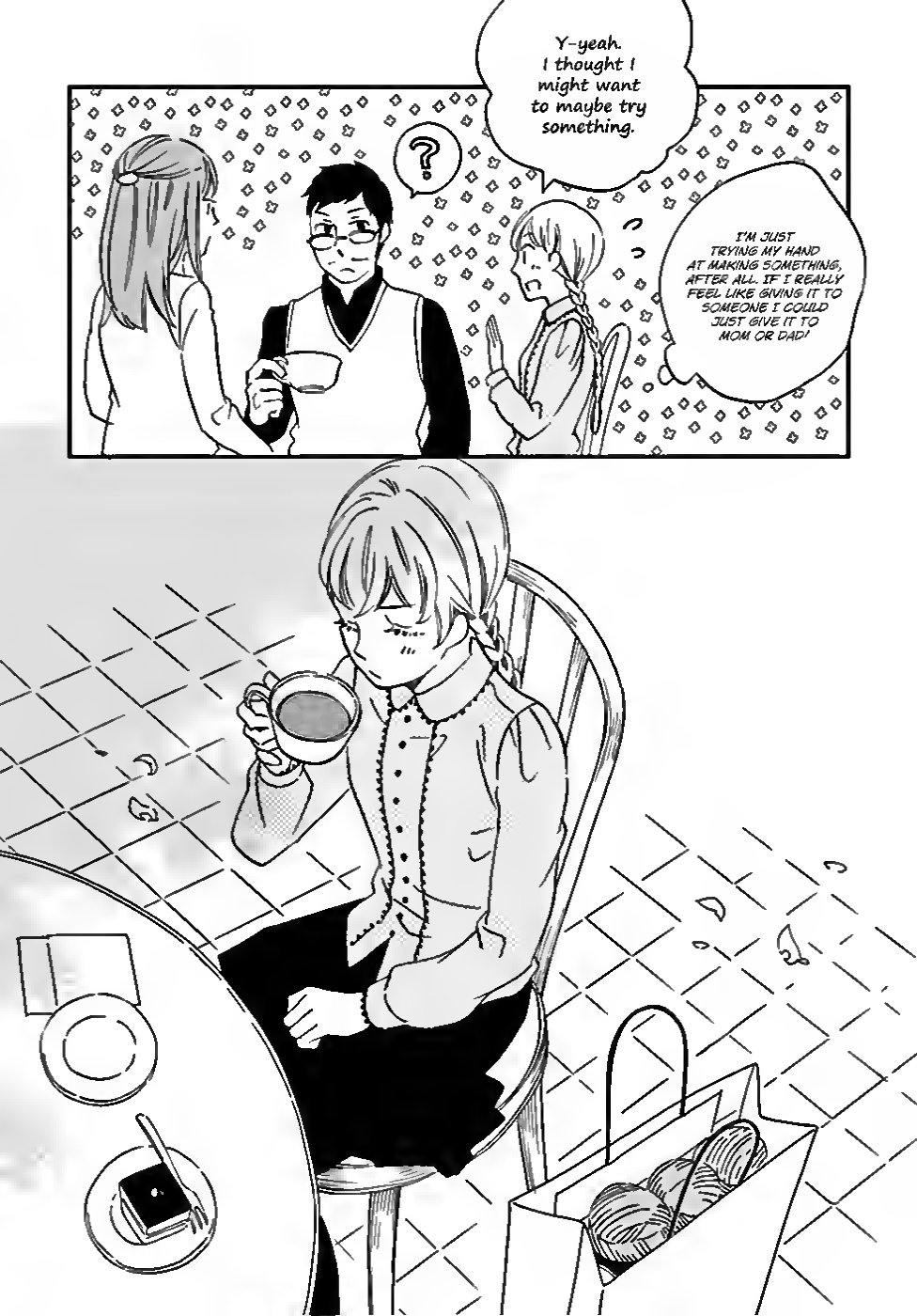
HEY, MADOKA?
I KNOW IT'S A LITTLE EARLY TO TALK ABOUT IT, BUT ARE YOU COMING HOME FOR CHRISTMAS?
WHAT?
MOM WANTS TO ORDER A CHRISTMAS CAKE FROM THIS POPULAR SHOP, AND IF SHE DOESN'T DO IT QUICKLY IT'LL BE TOO LATE.
SHE COULDN'T DECIDE BETWEEN THE TWO TYPES SHE WANTED, SO SHE WANTS TO ORDER BOTH.
FROM MAYU?
HM
BNNNNN
...
SO SHE NEEDS ME TO EAT CAKE FOR HER...
AND IF YOU'RE HERE THEN I'M SURE AZUSA WOULD COME TOO.
WELL, IT WILL BE WINTER VACATION BY THEN.
AND I DON'T HAVE ANY PARTICULAR PLANS, SO IT WOULD PROBABLY BE FINE IF I LEFT THE DORMS EARLY.
OKAY THEN I'M ADDING YOU AS A MEMBER AS WELL. WE CAN'T HAVE AZUSA PUTTING ON WEIGHT, SO YOU'D BETTER DO YOUR BEST TO EAT AS MUCH AS YOU CAN. I'M NOT GOING TO FORCE HER INTO EATING ANYTHING.
AH
11.

HEY, ABOUT AZUSA... SHE IS ACTUALLY PLANNING ON ENTERING AMAGAI, RIGHT?
.....
WHY DON'T YOU ASK HER YOURSELF?
I don't have that opportunity right now. That's why I'm asking you.
EITHER WAY YOU'RE JUST WORRIED BECAUSE HER FACE IS ALL OVER THE PLACE NOW, RIGHT?
BULL'S-EYE
AZUSA PROBABLY WON'T GO TO AMAGAI.

...THAT CAN'T BE RIGHT.
I'M CHEERING AZUSA ON, SO I'LL TELL IT TO YOU STRAIGHT.
YOU'RE DEAD WRONG IF YOU THINK AZUSA IS GOING TO KEEP STICKING AROUND YOU LIKE SOME CUTE LITTLE SISTER!
Sawano
BZZZZ
BZZZZ
毛糸
手あみ♡

TOILET
HE SAID HE WAS GOING TO REST IN THE CAFE ON THE FIRST FLOOR
THAT MAN WOULD NEVER COME ALONG FOR SHOPPING LIKE THIS.
I'm tired.
I'M GOING TO GO PICK OUT SOME EMBROIDERY THREAD, SO WAIT HERE A MINUTE.
OKAY. WHERE'S DAD?
KNITTING YARN..
THIS COLOR LOOKS LIKE IT WOULD SUIT HAZUKI-KUN.

WE'RE BACK!
OH, DONE SHOPPING ALREADY?
Could we have a menu please?
ARE YOU GOING TO MAKE SOMETHING TOO, ASUMI?
!!
YES, WE'RE DONE FOR THE DAY.
LET'S ORDER SOMETHING AS WELL, ASUMI.
I'D LIKE MILK TEA!


Y-yeah. I thought I might want to maybe try something.
?
I'M JUST TRYING MY HAND AT MAKING SOMETHING, AFTER ALL. IF I REALLY FEEL LIKE GIVING IT TO SOMEONE I COULD JUST GIVE IT TO MOM OR DAD!

Artificial Demons

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FROM FANS TO FANS. PLEASE SUPPORT THE AUTHOR BY PURCHASING THE ORIGINAL VERSION ONCE IT IS AVAILABLE IN YOUR COUNTRY.